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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Research Administration
U.S. Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine

DUTCH ELM DISEASE CONTROL

The Dutch elm disease is of European origin and was first discovered at widely separated points (New York, Baltimore, Norfolk, New Orleans) between 1926 and 1933. By 1934 it was established in a sizeable area around New York City and at small centers in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Maryland, and Virginia. No effort has been made at eradication since 1941.

Economic Significance: The Dutch elm disease has caused wholesale destruction of both planted and native elms in areas where the disease occurs. It is impossible to estimate the cost of removing and replacing diseased trees. Communities throughout New England have undertaken extensive protective measures. Within the past few years more than 130 cases of Dutch elm disease have been confirmed in the Washington, D. C., area.

Methods of Control: Dutch elm disease is spread from diseased to healthy trees by the bark beetle, Scolytus multistriatus. Control involves prompt destruction of diseased trees and systematic spraying during the period that beetles are active. Whether or not high value trees can be protected when the disease is permitted to spread unchecked in surrounding native timber is yet to be determined.

Current Program: Federal participation in Dutch elm disease control is limited to (1) the development and "pilot plant" testing of control measures; (2) the preparation and distribution of circulars advising State, county, municipalities, and individuals how to give their trees the highest degree of protection; and (3) maintenance of technical laboratory to determine whether or not suspected trees have the disease. About 6,000 specimens are processed annually.



